

ELIZABETH POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



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SUBJECT: ADULT SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS

EFFECTIVE DATE:

February 1, 2015

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:

N/A

BY THE ORDER OF:

Chief Patrick Shannon

BY AUTHORITY OF:

Police Director James Cosgrove

SUPERSEDES ORDER #:

PURPOSE The purpose of this general order is to codify the Elizabeth Police Department's policy and procedures concerning crossing guards.

POLICY It is the policy of the Elizabeth Police Department to employ adult school crossing guards in positions not requiring sworn personnel to safely and effectively direct all pedestrians in crossing streets and intersections.

PROCEDURES

I. GENERAL

- A. Adult school crossing guards are regulated by the State of New Jersey through N.J.S.A. 40A: 9-154.1, et seq.
- B. A school crossing guard is any adult civilian employee, who is selected, trained, and supervised by agency personnel and who is assigned to supervise the safe crossing of pedestrians.
- C. Adult school crossing guards are considered at-will seasonal employees and are generally appointed one week prior to the first day of school for a 180-day school calendar.
- D. The very presence of crossing guards helps to deter unlawful and unsafe acts by pedestrians and motorists. By employing safety procedures and by exercising due caution, crossing guards can help to reinforce desirable practices that can become habits.
- E. In the course of their regular assignments, crossing guards may provide other valuable assistance to the community such as reporting criminal and quasi-criminal activity, providing information to the public, or calling the police in some emergency.
- F. The school guard coordinator's responsibilities include:
 - 1. Organize and explain the basic responsibilities and tasks required of crossing guards, including substitute guards;
 - 2. Aid the division in the selection of qualified persons for crossing guard positions;
 - 3. Establishing training programs for guards to comply with law and departmental directives;
 - 4. Provide guidelines for crossing guards in their duties, responsibilities and tasks;
 - 5. Ensure that crossing guards are properly equipped with necessary safety devices;
 - 6. Periodically inspect crossing guards to ensure compliance with applicable directives, appearance guidelines, and document findings;
 - 7. Proactively address any conditions or deficiencies;
 - 8. Ensure discipline for crossing guards; and
 - 9. Investigate complaints personnel against crossing guards.

- G. The mission of adult school crossing guards is to oversee the safe crossing of school children, adults, and other pedestrians at designated crosswalks that are established by law. This mission is best accomplished by:
 - 1. Encouraging patterns of proper crossing behavior;
 - 2. Deterring pedestrians from committing unsafe and unlawful acts;
 - 3. Informing motorists by the appropriate signals that pedestrians are using, or about to use, a crossing;
 - 4. Observing and reporting incidents and/or conditions that present a potential hazard to pedestrian or guard safety to a police officer or school guard coordinator.

- H. All police personnel are required to notify their supervisors of any condition regarding the activity of crossing guards that could affect public safety. Such notification shall be forwarded to the school guard coordinator through the chain of command.

II. SELECTION AND TRAINING

- A. Applicants for the position of crossing guard must complete a standard city application for employment.
- B. The school guard coordinator shall cause a criminal background investigation including fingerprints.
- C. Applicants must take a basic medical examination after being given a conditional offer of employment. The medical examination must determine whether the applicant meets the minimum physical requirements for the position. These minimum physical requirements include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Ability to stand for the duration of his/her post;
 - 2. Ability to hold a stop sign in the outstretched position;
 - 3. Ability to see with or without corrected vision;
 - 4. Absence of color blindness;
 - 5. Ability to hear with or without correction.
- D. If abnormalities or deficiencies are identified as a result of the physical examination including vision and hearing tests, the guard is not qualified for the position.
- E. All adult school crossing guards must successfully complete a basic training course to develop the necessary skills they need to perform their job before being assigned to actual duty. Training shall minimally consist of:
 - 1. A minimum of two (2) hours of classroom instruction;

2. Twenty (20) hours of instruction in the field at an intersection under the direct supervision of a police officer or senior adult school crossing guard;
 3. Guards must successfully complete all phases of the training course;
 4. If there are areas that need remedial training after their evaluation, training should be continued for a time period determined by the Chief of Police or his/her designee. If the second evaluation is not satisfactory, the guard should be terminated for incompetence.
- F. Guards shall maintain familiarization with local traffic regulations especially those pertaining to motorist, bicyclist and pedestrian responsibilities in relation to school crossings, parking, and yielding the right-of-way.
- G. Guards shall understand the principles behind the use of traffic control devices, i.e., stop signs, signalization for motor vehicles and pedestrians, channelization and street markings.
- H. Guards should not be expected to become experts on signal timing or traffic engineering. However, their understanding of how these aids are used will enable them to recognize patterns and irregularities in the devices that could result in poor conditions for crossing the students. Guards shall specifically know the meaning of the WALK, FLASHING DON'T WALK, and SOLID DON'T WALK phases of the pedestrian crossing signal.
- I. At the beginning of each school year, The school guard coordinator shall require guards to attend a meeting consisting of:
1. A review of their duties and responsibilities;
 2. Training refresher, including video presentation(s);
 3. A review of new traffic laws that may affect their duties.
- J. New guards will be issued a reflective traffic safety vest. Incumbent guards must bring their issued reflective vests to this meeting and present them for inspection. Damages or worn vests will be replaced.

III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The guard's first concern is the safety of all pedestrians under his/her supervision (e.g., school children, parents, adults, transient pedestrians, etc.). Guards must reinforce safe street-crossing techniques. A guard's primary duty is to use gaps, and where necessary, create gaps in traffic to help pedestrians cross the street safely. **Guards should not direct vehicular traffic.**
- B. Guards are responsible for projecting a positive public image and serving as a positive role model for children.
- C. Guards are responsible for arriving promptly at their assigned post each day and remaining at their post throughout their assigned shift.
1. The typical post is from 0730hrs to 0830hrs and 1445hrs to 1530hrs

2. These hours may change if there is a delayed school opening.
 3. The Chief of Police or school guard coordinator may alter these hours to meet operational needs.
 4. The school guard coordinator will inform guards of any school schedule changes and/or special school functions that could affect their work schedule.
- D. All guards must call 908-558-2065 and advise if they will be tardy to their post and relay their estimated time of arrival. The duty desk officer will assign an officer to cover the post. Repeated tardiness and extreme tardiness will not be tolerated.
- E. If a guard is calling in sick for a shift:
1. After 6am call 908-558-2065
- F. Guards should contact the main desk (908) 558-2005 or listen to local media outlets (radio, television, etc.) to determine if school is closed or whether there is a delayed opening due to weather or other civil emergencies.
- G. Guards who feel ill or require a restroom break while on post must call 908-558-2065. School guard coordinator shall assign an officer for relief as soon as practicable. Guards are prohibited from asking a friend, acquaintance, parent, or stranger to substitute for them
- H. Any injury sustained by a guard while on duty must be reported immediately to a supervisor. All forms and reports must be completed in a timely manner.
- I. Guards shall not do personal business or use tobacco in any form while on duty. Guards shall not sit with vehicles, except:
1. During periods of stormy weather, guards may sit within their vehicles or take shelter near the post, but must be able to see all corners of their post without obstruction and be immediately ready to cross pedestrians when needed.
 2. Personal vehicles shall be legally parked.
 3. Use caution and watch for vehicular traffic when exiting or entering from a vehicle.
- J. Guards shall not engage in any actions that would reflect badly on the professional image of the school crossing guard while on duty.
1. Guards shall not use foul language or conduct activities inappropriate to their position while on duty.
 2. Guards shall not use radios, headphones or read books, magazines, newspapers, or any other material while on post. Talking or texting on a cell phone while on a post is generally prohibited unless contacting the police department.

- K. Guards shall not respond to requests or directives by school personnel either to change or add to their duties. All requests should be directed to the school guard coordinator.
- L. Guards shall report to their immediate supervisor any unusual situations, which are brought to their attention. Examples are irresponsible motorists, adults harassing students or students harassing other students. Supervisors shall ensure that any verbal notification is followed up with written documentation.
- M. In an emergency, guards will contact 9-1-1 on their wireless telephones, if so equipped.
- N. Guards shall not attempt to do anything they are not trained or equipped to do.
- O. Guards should take care not to come in contact with any blood or body fluids. Guards should not attempt to provide first-aid unless trained.
- P. Inclement or extreme weather conditions have a direct effect on safe street crossing. Vehicle traction, stopping distance and motorists' ability to see are adversely affected by bad weather. Increased alertness and caution are necessary. Guards shall not use umbrellas or other devices that would impede their ability to use their hands or impede their hearing or vision.
- K. Obstructions and unusual circumstances can lead to high-risk vehicle/pedestrian conflicts. Guards should be instructed on what to observe and how to report potential problems. These circumstances include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Inoperative or missing traffic control devices;
 - 2. Roadway or sidewalk construction hazards;
 - 3. Sight obstructions;
 - 4. Recurring standing water;
 - 5. Poor street markings;
 - 6. Snow and ice conditions at crosswalks.
- L. It is sometimes necessary for crossing guards to be able to adequately describe and identify vehicles that are endangering the safety of pedestrians. Guards shall be instructed on how to identify vehicles by:
 - 1. Make, model, body style, color of vehicle;
 - 2. License plate number;
 - 3. Physical descriptors of driver or passengers;
 - 4. Date and time of incident.

IV. CROSSING LOCATIONS

- A. Requests for crossing posts should be directed to the school guard coordinator. The school guard coordinator shall evaluate the request and report any findings and recommendations to the Chief of Police, as the City Council must approve funding for each new position.
- B. Criteria for determining the crossing guard location includes an analysis of the following:
 - 1. Number of children present for crossing;
 - 2. Relative age of children;
 - 3. Design of intersection;
 - 4. Type of traffic control already present;
 - 5. Volume of traffic;
 - 6. Crash history;
 - 7. Possibility of alternative route through presently protected area.
- C. Each September, the school guard coordinator shall cause a survey of all school crossing guard locations and all schools within the city. This survey will help to determine if pedestrian patterns have changed significantly enough to warrant the creation, elimination, or modification of existing posts.
- D. The school guard coordinator shall notify and ensure that DPW repaints the crosswalks under its jurisdiction when required.
- E. Posts existing on state or county highways shall be continually monitored to ensure that the crosswalks are clearly visible. The school guard coordinator shall ensure that the State Department of Transportation and/or the Union County Department of Public Works are notified of any restriping needs.